Rail Surveillance System

†733. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Rail Surveillance System has fallen prey to negligence and mismanagement;

(b) whether it is also a fact that any concrete scheme is not being effected with a view to making the rail journey more comforting, reliable and systematic;

(c) if so, the reasons for the same not being taken seriously by Government; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the recent spate in rail accidents throughout the country and the negligence towards security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a): No, Sir. Indian Railways accord highest priority to safety in train operations. However safety on Indian Railways is an on going and continuous process. A number of safety measures arc already being used on Zonal Railways with a view to make journey of passenger and goods trains safe and comfortable.

(b) to (d) Concrete steps have been initiated by Railways to avoid accidents on account of human failure and latest technology and sofisticated devices are being used within the available resources by Railways to make the train travel more safe, reliable and comfortable. In first quarter of this financial year there were 92 accidents as compared to 119 accidents during the same period last year. As per the constitution, maintenance of law and order on the Railways including running trains is the responsibility of the State Governments. The Railways maintain close co-ordination with the State Authorities at all levels to ensure adequate security to the travelling public.

Over-crowded trains in Eastern Railways

734. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government arc aware that the Asansol-Burdwan trains in Eastern Railways are running over-crowded and have become source of hardship to people; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government have any plan to increase the EMU service; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) The capacity of the existing train services on the Asansol-Burdwan section is considered adequate to cater to the present levels of demand.

(b) At present there is no proposal to increase EMU services on this sector.

Quality of meals in trains

†735. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quality of meals being served in trains is constantly deteriorating whereas prices thereof are increasing; and

(b) if so, the details of steps being taken by Government to check this opposite trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Menu and tariff of standard meals, breakfast, tea / coffee is fixed by the Ministry of Railways from time to time taking into account the cost of raw material prevailing in the market and other over head charges.

Railways have taken a number of policy initiatives including use of branded product, sale of reputed brand ISI marked packaged drinking water, use of standard cooking media, replacing open thali meals with casseroles, introduction of ecofriendly packaging and improved services standards etc. Surprise checks are organised from time to time at various levels and defaulters arc taken up.

Touts in rail reservations

†736. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any action against the touts active in rail reservations;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.